

Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission

Bylaws

Adopted May 25, 2010

Purpose

City Enterprise Advisory Functions:

The Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission (herein after referred to as the NCEC or simply the "commission") advises the Mayor and City Council on development or improvement of community participation policies, the delivery of services and decision-making processes to systematize community input into City processes, provides feedback and recommendations for improvements to City departments regarding community participation and the City's adopted Community Engagement Principles, and advises elected officials and City departments on community issues and needs related to community participation and the City's community participation system.

Oversight of Community Engagement Systems:

The NCEC provides overall direction to the next phase of the neighborhood revitalization and community engagement programs including the review and recommendation of neighborhood plans for approval by the City Council, and reviews, advises and makes recommendations on the business plan and the budget for the City's Neighborhood and Community Relations Department.

The NCEC makes recommendations on, and monitors the distribution and use of the basic Citizen Participation Services funds, makes recommendations on the criteria, formula, distribution and use of the Neighborhood Investment Fund and monitors its distribution and use; and recommends awards of grants through the Community Innovation Fund.

The NCEC actively assists in short and long-term planning, development and implementation of the City's community engagement system and implementation of recommendations of the 2007 Community Engagement Task Force.

Evaluation and Reporting

There is no sunset provision however the NCEC shall continuously evaluate its work and responsibilities to evolve with the needs of Minneapolis communities, and provide periodic reports, at least annually, to be presented to the City Council Committee of the Whole.

Membership

The commission consists of 16 membership seats. The length of membership term is 24 months with a limit of three (3) two-year terms. Compensation is not provided.

For the purposes of these bylaws, the "seated membership" consists of all membership seats that are not vacant.

For positions appointed using the City of Minneapolis open appointments process a public hearing shall be held. All members shall be residents of the City of Minneapolis who do not hold a current election certificate.

Section 1. Selection Procedure:

8 members appointed using the City's open appointments process and a public hearing

5 members appointed by the City Council of the City of Minneapolis; and

2 members appointed by the Mayor of the City of Minneapolis;

1 member appointed by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

- 1 Mayoral appointment and 3 City Council appointments will be appointed in even number years
- 1 Mayoral appointment, 2 City Council appointments and 1 Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board appointment will be appointed in odd number years

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8 members selected by the City's officially recognized neighborhood organizations through a process defined by the officially recognized neighborhood organizations. The NCEC will maintain a record of the current selection process for neighborhood organizations.

The representatives selected by neighborhood organizations shall be eight residents of the city of Minneapolis selected in accordance with the NCEC's selection procedure.

- Half of the members will be selected in even numbered years
- Half of the members will be selected in odd numbered years

The commission will work with neighborhood organizations to establish uniform selection procedures.

All members selected or appointed shall begin their terms in July and the process to select or appoint each member shall be based upon this start date.

Appointments should reflect the diverse interests and perspectives of the Minneapolis community. The recruitment process should be designed to ensure diversity of representation and ideas and take into consideration the City's commitment to civil rights, affirmative action and geographic distribution wherever possible.

Section 2. **Attendance Requirements:**

Three (3) unexcused absences from the regularly scheduled monthly NCEC meetings during a term year (July – June) may result in disciplinary action up to and including recommendation for removal from the NCEC.

Section 3. **Membership in Good Standing:**

All NCEC members shall be aware that they represent the community and act in accordance at all times. If a member acts in such a way that reflects negatively on the NCEC, disciplinary action up to and including recommendation for removal from the NCEC may result.

Section 4. **Recommendation of Removal:**

The NCEC may recommend a member for removal to their appointing or selecting authority through the following process.

The discussion for recommendation for removal must occur during a regularly scheduled NCEC monthly meeting and must be on the meeting agenda with notice requirements as defined by these bylaws. If consensus for recommendation for removal cannot be reached, a vote of three-fourths of the NCEC seated membership is required. Within 10 days of the recommendation for removal, the NCR Director shall contact, in writing, the appropriate appointing or selecting authority to make them aware of the recommendation for removal and the reason for this recommendation and request appropriate action be taken for removal of this individual from the NCEC. It shall be left to the appointing or selecting authority whether or not to declare that person's position vacant and to make a replacement appointment.

Section 5. **Resignation:**

Letters of resignation should be submitted directly to the NCR Director. The Director shall make commissioners aware of the vacancy within 10 days of the resignation and have the vacancy as an agenda item at the next regularly scheduled NCEC meeting. NCR staff will contact the appropriate appointing or selecting authority to make them aware of the vacancy so they can begin the process of filling the position.

Section 6. **Vacancy:**

The same procedure used in selecting new members shall be used in filling vacancies. Replacements will serve out the remaining term they are replacing.

Quorum

A quorum of the NCEC shall consist of a majority ($1/2 + 1$) of the members. Once quorum is established at least five members must be present to transact business. In the case of exactly five members business may only be

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transacted by consensus as defined in the Governance section excluding the majority vote option. There shall be no quorum requirements for committees or task forces unless defined by the creating authority; or if the committee or task force has been empowered by the creating authority with binding decision making power. In the case of a committee or task force empowered with decision making authority quorum shall be the majority ($1/2 + 1$) of the membership of the committee or task force unless otherwise indicated by the creating authority.

Governance

Section 1. Prerequisites

The Minneapolis City Council Resolution establishing the NCEC does not prescribe a decision-making model. Section 9 of the enabling resolution, *Selection of officers*, specifies that a chair and any other officers shall be selected by the 16 member commission.

Section 2. Consensus Process

Decisions made by the NCEC shall be consensus whenever possible, and may be made by majority vote if it is determined by the meeting facilitator, after all of the decision-making steps below have been taken, that consensus is not possible. The premise of a consensus model is that we are all leaders, that decisions reached through consensus are stronger decisions, and that a more traditional leadership model, while more familiar, would be less consistent with the goals of community engagement.

The **decision-making steps** to be used by NCEC shall be:

- A. Action items may be brought before work groups and the full NCEC as part of the decision-making process. It is preferred that action items have the benefit of work group review and recommendation before being brought before the full NCEC.
- B. The goal of the decision-making group shall be to adjust, compromise, and refine a proposal or decision-item so that all commissioners are satisfied with the result, or if not satisfied, not opposed to the decision. Commissioners are encouraged to propose changes to action items in writing but the commission may, at its discretion, entertain proposed actions made through other means.
- C. The meeting facilitator may seek confirmation of consensus through an affirmative response to the question, "Does everyone agree?" or "If you do not agree, can you accept the proposed outcome?"
- D. If consensus does not exist, the meeting facilitator should repeat the process in steps B and C. At this point, the meeting facilitator is encouraged to pursue clarification of where there is agreement and where there is disagreement among commissioners and whether any adjustments, compromises or refinements would bridge remaining areas of disagreement. Inquiries that may assist in identifying consensus opportunities include "What aspects of the proposed outcome do you agree or disagree with?" and "What adjustments to the proposed outcome would allow you to support, or not oppose, the proposed action?"
- E. If there is no consensus after steps B through D have been repeated, those who disagree shall be asked by the meeting facilitator if they are willing to let the decision stand if their objections are included in the meeting notes.
- F. If there is still no consensus, the meeting facilitator should assess the potential for achieving consensus and may recommend to continue the consensus building process, postpone action on the matter in question, or refer the action item back to a work group. If there is no consensus for any of those options, action may be taken using the following process:
 1. If fifty percent plus one of the work group or commission votes in support of the proposed action, provided that requirements of the Quorum section of these Bylaws are met, it shall be deemed the adopted position of the full group.
 2. The meeting notes shall include a recording of the vote and of the dissenting opinions.
 3. The meeting facilitator does not vote except in the case of a tie.
- G. The meeting facilitator should restate the final action of the group to ensure clarity about the decision reached.

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Section 3. **Facilitation Committee:**

A facilitation committee consisting of four commissioners shall be annually selected at the August regular meeting of the commission. The purpose of the committee is administrative in nature only and is limited to providing for meeting management and coordinating agendas consistent with the adopted work plan of the commission. Responsibility for developing recommendations for action items where necessary to carry out the mission of the commission rests with other work groups, whether established as ad hoc or permanent committees, subject to the will of the commission.

The full NCEC and not the Facilitation Committee is responsible for:

- communicating on behalf of the commission;
- prioritizing the items contained in the work plan;
- negotiating solutions on behalf of the commission; or
- developing proposals for consideration and approval by the commission.

In fulfilling the responsibilities of the Facilitation Committee, its members are expected to function as a group rather than identifying individual members to be fully responsible for selected commission meeting agendas.

Section 4. **Facilitation Committee Membership, Selection and Terms:**

The first action item at the August regular meeting shall be the selection of a Facilitation Committee. Commissioners shall be nominated for the Committee by themselves or by other commissioners. If more than four commissioners are nominated, and in the absence of a consensus to do otherwise, the meeting facilitator must proceed to a vote by the full commission to determine the membership of the Facilitation Committee from among those nominated. Each member present may vote for up to four commissioners from among those nominated and the vote shall be cast by secret ballot. The votes shall be tallied by a commissioner selected by the meeting facilitator who may not be a nominee. The four commissioners receiving the most votes shall serve as the Facilitation Committee. The names of the four commissioners who received sufficient votes to be elected shall be read aloud. In the case of a tie vote among the nominees receiving the lowest number of votes being necessary to fill all four positions on the Facilitation Committee, subsequent votes shall be taken as necessary to fill all four positions from among those nominees not already having received a sufficient number of votes needed to be selected for the Committee. Facilitation Committee members shall serve for one year and may be re-elected.

Section 5. **Meeting Facilitators:**

One primary facilitator and one associate facilitator must be present for each meeting. Each member of the Facilitation Committee shall facilitate at least one and not more than six full commission meetings.

Section 6. **Meeting Facilitator Role:**

The primary role of the meeting facilitator is to ensure discussions are conducted in the spirit and manner of consensus based decision making as outlined in these bylaws. They are responsible for providing an opportunity for all points of view to be heard on items before the commission and guiding the progress of discussions toward decisions with broad based support that reflect viewpoints held by the majority of commissioners adjusted, as is possible, by concerns of the remaining commissioners.

The meeting facilitator is expected to be an advocate for reaching a consensus decision. The group generally defers decision-making process matters to the meeting facilitator but maintains responsibility for the content of the action item before it.

The primary and associate meeting facilitators are encouraged to work together to ensure efficient meeting management, keep time as needed, ensure commissioners wanting to speak are afforded equal access to the discussion, and listen for commonalities and opportunities for consensus.

Section 7. **Authentication of Meeting Actions:**

Any correspondence communicating actions taken by the NCEC shall be authenticated by the commissioner who facilitated the meeting at which the decision was made.

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Meetings

Section 1. – Regular Meetings:

The NCEC shall meet monthly. A schedule for the regular meetings stating the dates and times shall be posted online with advance notice of at least sixty (60) calendar days. Meetings shall be convened by the primary facilitator or, in the absence of the primary facilitator, the associate facilitator and staffed by the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department.

Section 2. – Annual Business:

Annual Business shall be conducted as part of a regularly scheduled NCEC meeting every twelve months. Annual business shall include approval of an annual report of NCEC activities to be submitted to the Mayor and City Council and adoption of a twelve (12) month work plan. The work plan will also be reviewed periodically. The availability of the approved annual report of the NCEC will be announced to neighborhood and community organizations.

Section 3. – Special Meetings:

Special meetings shall only be called by the Facilitation Committee in consultation with the NCR department staff member assigned to the NCEC, or by written request to the Facilitator Committee primary and associate facilitators and the NCR department of at least a quorum of NCEC members. The meeting announcement shall be in compliance with notice requirements as defined by these bylaws. The notice shall identify the date, time and place of the meeting and shall include the business to be conducted at the meeting. Business that is not identified in the notice of the special meeting may not be conducted. Meetings shall be convened by a member of the Facilitator Committee or, in their absence, a commissioner chosen by a quorum of commissioners and staffed by the Neighborhood and Community Relations department.

Section 4. – Notice:

Public notice of regular, special meetings of the NCEC and meetings of a Committee of the Whole, stating the time, date, and place thereof, shall be posted online and emailed to all commissioners not less than 2 business days nor more than 20 business days prior to the meeting, excluding the day of the meeting. Public notice of regular, special meetings of the NCEC and meetings of a Committee of the Whole shall be posted in accordance with the open meeting law.

Section 6. – Open Meetings:

All NCEC regular, special, and meetings of the NCEC Committee of the Whole shall be open to the public and subject to the requirements of the Minnesota Open Meeting Law. All regular meetings of the commission shall be televised when possible. All committee and task force meetings will be open to the public.

Section 7. – Notes:

Official notes shall be taken at every regular and special meeting of the NCEC. Official notes shall not be required for task forces and committees unless otherwise indicated in the charge creating them. The notes shall record persons in attendance, the satisfaction of quorum requirement, the identity of the commissioners not in attendance, wording of agreements, and actions taken.

Section 8. – Proxies:

Proxies, written or otherwise shall not be permitted.

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Establishment of Committees or Task Forces

The NCEC shall establish committees or task forces as it may deem necessary and appropriate. Except for the Committee of the Whole, no committee or task force shall have more than eight NCEC voting members.

Section 1. Advisory Capacity:

All committees or task forces of the NCEC shall serve in an advisory capacity to the NCEC. No committees or task forces shall have authority to approve or execute decisions or actions on behalf of the NCEC unless explicitly given that authority by the NCEC.

Section 2. Purpose and Members of Committees and/or Task Forces:

All committees or task forces created by the NCEC shall be documented with, at minimum, the following information:

1. Purpose
2. Duration
3. Number of members
4. Selection criteria for members
5. A commissioner shall be identified from the group of volunteers to have the responsibility of helping to convene the first meeting. At the first meeting the task force/committee may select a permanent meeting facilitator unless otherwise indicated in its charge.

Membership on committees or task forces is assumed to be members of the NCEC unless otherwise specified.

Formal Communications Policy

- A. Formal communication is defined as transmitting a position or statement of policy of the commission to another party, parties or entity. The communication method may be oral, written, or electronic. All formal communications must be authorized by the commission.
- B. The principal communicator shall be the current primary facilitator, then the associate facilitator, or by appointment. Any commissioner may give a personal opinion as long as it is clear that it is a personal opinion and that they are not speaking for the commission itself.
- C. A commissioner who violates these rules may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including recommendation for removal pursuant to these bylaws.

Bylaws Adoption and Amendment

Section 1. Adoption

These Bylaws shall be adopted by consensus or if by vote, then be an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the seated membership of the NCEC. The month and date of initial adoption must be recorded on the cover page of these Bylaws once adopted.

Section 2. Maintenance

These Bylaws must be reviewed by a work group of the NCEC at least once every two years beginning from the date of initial adoption.

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Section 3. **Amendment**

These Bylaws may be amended at anytime provided that any proposed change to the Bylaws may not be acted on until the regularly scheduled monthly NCEC meeting of the commission following the month in which the proposed Bylaw change is presented, in writing, to the commission. Amendments of these Bylaws shall be adopted by consensus or if by vote, then be an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the seated membership of the NCEC.

Section 4. **Initial Implementation**

These Bylaws may contain references to dates and terms of service that do not correspond to the date of initial approval of these Bylaws. It is the intent of the commission that any responsibilities and terms of service called for in these Bylaws, once initially adopted, be fulfilled for a temporary period of time beginning with the initial date of adoption and running until such time that a natural full term of service shall otherwise begin under these Bylaws.

Ethics/Conflict-of-Interest

The commission shall comply with the ethics and conflict of interest policy as outlined in the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances [Title 2 Chapter 15](#) ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT.